

CPS HIGH SCHOOL SINGLE APPLICATION FAQs

JULY 27, 2017

At our community forum on CPS' new single application for high schools, we asked attendees to write down questions they have about the new application. These questions cover a broad range of topics and were asked by parents, teachers, counselors, and students.

SCHOOL INCLUSION

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are selective enrollment schools included in the single application? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is still a separate application for selective enrollment schools. It will be possible for students to receive an offer from a selective enrollment school and an offer from a non-selective enrollment school. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do private elementary schools receive this information and dispense it to their students who may be going to public high schools? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This will be up to the elementary school counselor and community based organizations working in that school's area |

APPLICATION PROCESS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do students learn about all the different schools and programs? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPS is encouraging families to do their own research by using the GoCPS website, conducting school visits, and seeking counselor assistance. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happens if a student changes their mind about their ranking of schools later in the year? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There will be a second round of matching after the initial offers are given. There will also be a centrally managed, open transfer period throughout the spring and summer until the 20th day of school. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What level of support will families and counselors be given to navigate this new system? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some counselor training is occurring but not all counselors have been able to attend. CPS has contracted 8 community organizations to help support elementary counselors but more outreach is necessary. |

ALGORITHM

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the algorithm include test scores? Race? Gender? Demographics? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It includes 7th grade NWEA test scores, but it does not consider race or gender.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we need to provide the parent's highest level of school completion for the demographic information portion? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no such question.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do students need to rank 20 choices? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce the incidence that students are not matched with any school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data is going to be used to match students with the school? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When parents log in with their child's PIN, GoCPS will know the child's test scores and will indicate the schools or programs for which the child is eligible. Some programs or schools might have additional criteria such as geographic priority or an interview. Once students rank their choices, they will be matched with the choice they ranked highest that also chose them back.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does highest possible choice mean? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the single school or program the student is matched with: the highest ranked school on a student's list that also chose the student.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What criterion determines highest possible choice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student's own ranking as well as the student's eligibility to attend a school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will this algorithm account for students without stable housing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear. CPS is working with the Chicago Coalition for Homeless around supporting students in transitional living situations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will different elements be weighted in the new system? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a student does not meet the eligibility criteria (usually related to test scores) they may not apply to that school or program. Whether other factors exist depends on each school or program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why wasn't the algorithm explained to parents before the application was implemented? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPS did not want to confuse parents by introducing GoCPS before the 2016-17 eighth graders received their HS placements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which is more important in the algorithm: school or program for enrollment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is up to each family to decide. Some students may only want to attend IB programs, so they will rank IB programs at various schools whereas another student may rank several programs at the same school because they prioritize that school over another.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will students be matched to a school? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will be matched to their highest ranked school that they are both eligible to attend and that has chosen them back.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the algorithm work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes into account sibling status, test scores, family preferences (which can include location, programmatic preferences), and each school's criteria for admission.

ACCESSIBILITY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the application be available in languages other than English and Spanish, such as Chinese? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application will be available in Spanish.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will CPS help families who need technology access? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A paper application will be available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this application process engage families without access to computers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the GoCPS website FAQs, the paper application will be accessible from the GoCPS website.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will happen if there are glitches in the GoCPS application process such as "error messages" that make it impossible to complete the application? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and students experiencing technical difficulties can call the CPS Office of Access and Enrollment: 773-553-2060.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When were families first notified of the new process? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spring of 2017.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will CPS make sure all families are notified? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because the application requires a unique pin login, CPS can view which families have not yet applied so counselors can check up on them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was community feedback sought, and if so what was said? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPS held some parent focus groups, as did THRIVE Chicago, in which parents asked for a more streamlined application process. It is unclear whether or how parents were engaged regarding the matching system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and by whom was the "single application"/"one choice" process chosen as opposed to other options such as "controlled choice"? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPS did not consider controlled choice because in order to achieve that system, a central system must already be in place. It is possible for single choice to evolve into controlled choice later.

MARKETING

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will CPS help high schools with marketing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPS may produce fliers and other materials that schools can then personalize. Generation All is advocating that CPS provide more robust marketing support to their schools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will charters be put at an advantage in this process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unclear. Charter schools, by law, cannot have any specialty programs that admit students according to any criteria, so they will not have any programs listed on GoCPS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Since school websites are managed by schools and vary in terms of quality, how will CPS help schools improve their websites?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unclear, as websites are located and maintained by the personnel at each school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The GoCPS website currently links to school profiles on www.cps.edu which are poorly made and misleading for some schools; will they be improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It does not seem that school profile pages on cps.edu will be updated.

DIVERSE LEARNERS

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does CPS plan to handle parents who need to advocate for their child with special needs to receive a free and appropriate public education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unclear.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will this help our English Learner (EL) students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unclear.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does this affect special education students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unclear.

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will this change anything about the lack of resources available for neighborhood schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will this affect the funding for our neighborhood schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is likely. Funding is allocated on a per student basis, so if neighborhood school enrollment decreases due to this application, so will funding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will this application deplete the populations of already poorly funding neighborhood schools so that they eventually close?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perhaps. If neighborhood schools become poorly attended it will be much easier to make the case to close them.

OUTCOMES

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will CPS evaluate the progress and success of this new application process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPS aims to have 100% of eighth graders and their families use GoCPS this school year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will this make schools more segregated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It will likely exacerbate the current state of tracking students based on academic performance while continuing racial segregation between schools due to the unequal distribution of high quality open enrollment schools across the city.